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Our Journey to the East.

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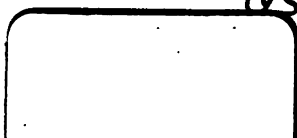
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Amelior

To Miss Annie Muir.
From
Anny. _____

HOW WE FARED AND HOW WE FELT IN OUR
JOURNEY TO THE EAST.



HOW WE FARED AND HOW WE FELT
IN OUR
JOURNEY TO THE EAST.

BEING STRAY LEAVES FROM A JOURNAL.

By A. B. McQueen

Private.

GLASGOW:
JAMES MACLEHOSE AND SONS, ST. VINCENT STREET,
Publishers to the University.
1882.



STRAY LEAVES FROM A JOURNAL.

TENTS PITCHED AT BERFILYAH,
March 11, 1880.

ON Saturday (March 6) we left Cairo at 11.30 by rail for Ismailiya with much regret. The place had become a sort of familiar home to us, with the shifting scenes of which we never wearied; and the terrace of Shepherd's Hotel and the friends that grouped upon it, had won our liking till it almost seemed a real going into the desert to leave them. We got a carriage to ourselves, and took with us provisions for the day. The whole journey was a strange example of "how not to do it." The train might as well have left at 7 or 8 or 9, but it left at 11.30; an hour was wasted at Zakayih, where, however, E. and R. got a fairish lunch, and where we were needlessly shifted from a full train to an empty one. From thence to the end, the line ran first along, and then literally through the desert, of which, stretching immeasurably to the east, we had a really grand view. We had left the land of Goshen, and were somewhere on the track of the Israelites, who, however, I believe, crossed the plain much nearer the Mediterranean than the present termination of the Red Sea. At five o'clock we reached Ismailiya, a new town about midway on the Suez Canal, and after the usual vociferations of Arab porters, got our luggage transferred to a small steamer—if steamer it could be called—which Cook's people had chartered for the use of those who took their

railway and boat tickets, and which saved us from Arab companionship during the rest of the journey. It was about the size of a small Forth and Clyde Canal boat, with a cabin holding some dozen people, into which the ladies were shown, the gentlemen lying or sitting on the deck, with strong injunctions not to stand or walk about, lest the whole thing should topple over. It went, however, at a great speed, though it was twelve at night before we reached Port Said. During all this time I sat at the prow on the front of the cabin with A. for the better part of the time sound asleep at my feet. After an hour it got perfectly dark, and the only occupation was watching the dark outline of the banks of the canal, marvelling how the steersman knew where he was going when we got into the wider reaches where these flitted from view, and looking at the bright stars overhead, and the lights of great steamers lying at anchor, which we passed every now and then. One of them was H.M.S. "Crocodile," an enormous troopship, carrying a regiment home. The sudden sight of its myriad port-holes, tier above tier, all lighted up, and the crowds of faces on board, flashing out of and into the darkness, was like a dream. In the middle of the night, when all below were asleep, came a loud crash from the cabin—all started up—E. rushing up the steps almost into my arms, in the firm belief we had struck something and were sinking. It turned out that one of the sleepers with a kick had upset the table piled with bags and cloaks and eatables, and a good laugh ended the stramash.

On arriving at Port Said, to carry out the beauty of the arrangements, we were transferred to another similar steamer, which took us to the hotel. Attached to this second vessel was a great broad barge for the luggage, up and over which we had to clamber, picking our own way. Right in front of the cabin door the hold was left open, so

that, to prevent the ladies going into it head foremost, A. and I stood stride-legs across it. All this in the pitch dark night, with a flickering lantern and shaky planks, was a lively specimen of Egyptian management. It was about one when we reached the hotel; a great palatial building built in expectation of a wonderful trade that has never come, and certainly won't come till it is under better management. After four of the party had got coffee, there was no more to be had for love or money. We got good rooms, however, and slept the sleep of the just.

Sunday, March 7.

A glorious morning! the sun peering in at the windows, and the harbour all alive with steamers and vessels of every kind. It looked so bright and promised to be so calm! Alas! after a shocking bad lunch at ten o'clock—meat absolutely like leather—we went on board the "Oreste," which was to sail at noon. Now, the sail to Jaffa takes fifteen hours at the outside; they can't unload before daylight, and the steamer lies all day there besides, so, of course, they needs must start so early as to go of necessity at about half-speed the whole way, and doubly feel any swell there may be. Salvatore Pace, our dragoman, had come in her from Alexandria, and called for us in the morning, and, as it turned out, it was a blessing he was with us. The boat, one of the smallest in the Austrian Lloyd Service, was about the size of a Londonderry steamer, and half the deck was railed off and turned into a long separate tent, under which was a whole Hareem of Arab wives with all their belongings, and children, and sacks, and coffee-pans, &c. Our berths—two double ones—were well enough. We started about one o'clock, and had hardly got out of the harbour when the swell became decidedly unpleasant. R. gave in first, then E.,

and soon I also had to take to bed. There was no stewardess, and what E. would have done but for Pace, who literally sat with her the whole night, I hardly know. About four A. too gave in, and though neither he nor I were ever regularly sick, we were woefully wretched. As for E. and R. they suffered indescribably. The swell increased. Oh, how the boat pitched! That wretched half-speed aggravated the horrors—draw a curtain over them. About five I wake to see through my port-hole the moon and morning star bright over the coast of Palestine, and to watch the rising of the sun, and marvel how we are to land. About six we anchored off Jaffa, some two miles from the shore, and in a trice were surrounded by crowds of Arab boats, pitching and tossing about like egg-shells on the ocean. The row and hurry-scurry and racket were indescribable. Pace got the luggage together and went ashore with it, advising us to wait till the turmoil was over; but the motion was still so great that I packed off E. and R. with A. in one of Cook's boats, telling A. to take them to the Jerusalem Hotel and get them to bed. Meanwhile I waited till Pace's boat returned, watching the curious scene—the boats, loading with passengers and goods, sometimes suddenly disappearing in the trough of the waves; the transportation of the Arabs and their chattels; the town stretching up the face of the hill, glittering in the sun, the groves of oranges and lemons behind it; the sandy shore stretching away to the land of the Philistines on the south and to Mount Carmel on the north; and the bright sun smiling on all, and on the mountains of Judea behind—and thinking of many things.

At last the boat arrived; and, with the luggage that had been in our cabins, I landed in solitary state; and, though I had had nothing since ten the morning before, was able to take a mouthful of whisky and a pipe for my breakfast with wonderful gusto.

Past the custom-house, where two francs enabled me to dispense with examination, I was led away to a green hill to the south of the town, where the tents (which had been sent on from Cairo earlier in the week) were being pitched, and there for an hour I watched the process with no little interest. The view was glorious. About 100 feet above the sea, we commanded the whole offing, while the town lay to our right, cemeteries and gardens making up the background. We have two sleeping tents, each with two folding iron bedsteads and folding dressing-table; a large dinner tent, with a circular table round the pole; a cooking tent, the size of the sleeping tents; and a luncheon tent of a small square size, to be used for lunch when the other tents are sent on to the camping-ground. From two of the tents the British flag flies, and in front is a small standard which carries a larger British flag by day, and a lantern by night. The whole thing is most picturesque. The sleeping tents have waterproof floorings, and over these are stretched carpets or rugs—the eating-tent has a simple carpet. The mass of accessories in the way of boxes for plate, cooking apparatus, crockery, and provisions is something confounding.

Having watched all this for an hour, I made my way to the hotel, about a mile off, when I found E. and R. in bed, and wonderfully recovered. Leaving them there, A. and I took advantage of a party of Cook's people going to the alleged house of Simon the Tanner (where Peter lived, and saw the vision of the sheet descending from heaven) to go with them. The house is now a mosque, and the site very dubious; but the view from the roof was fine, and a well beside it is certainly as old as the Apostle's time. Thence we went to Miss Arnot's school for young girls, and were greatly pleased. The place is the perfection of cleanliness and neatness, and

the children remarkably interesting and many of them beautiful. They sung us some hymns in Arabic. The view from the roof (it is in the highest part of Joppa) was perfectly lovely. The whole country around, except along the shore, was a mass of orange and lemon groves, with houses peering through them. Back to the hotel to lunch—E. being up by this time—and then an hour or two's sport in watching the start of the parties under Cook's charge for Ramleh, the first stage to Jerusalem. Then, under the guidance of Pace, who had come to the hotel, we all made our way to the tents, our future home for some thirty days.

At six we had dinner—about as good as we have had since we left home, perhaps better. Whatever happens, we have a first-rate cook, and he understands about strong soup and tender meat. We had soup and three courses—then, sweets, fruit, and coffee. Meanwhile, the wind, which had been blowing very fresh, subsided, and the stars came out, and the revolving light from the town poured out in turn its bright yellow and bright red blaze; and we felt charmed, and as if we were entering on a course of the purest enjoyment. The wonderful air breathed new life into our veins, and E., who had hesitated on account of the wind whether she should not take advantage of the hotel for the first night, made up her mind to sleep in the tents, and so about ten o'clock we all settled down to our rest.

Tuesday, March 9.

At four a.m. the striking of a match awakened A. and myself, and he saw at the door of the tent a face appear for a minute. Half confused—he thinking it might be the guard, and I with an idea that E. might be ill—I sprung up and looked out. All was dark; but I found that the opening through which glim-

mered the dim light of the night was not the door, but a panel of the tent lining near it and at the foot of my bed, which was dangling loose. In a moment I cried out "One of the portmanteaus is gone," and looking out about ten yards off saw something black on the ground. Running up to it I found A.'s portmanteau lying, and his and my black hand-bags; mine cut open. At once we raised the alarm, and on Pace and the other men rushing out, it was found that the man who should have been our guard was absent. Out of A.'s portmanteau had been taken a new shooting coat and trousers, a pair of riding trousers, some socks, and the little stud-box that N. had given him. It was clear there had been two at the work. After my bag had been cut (nothing was taken out of it) one fellow had just begun to cut A.'s open (the mark of the point of the knife was plain) when he had been startled, and this must have been just as the match which wakened us was struck close to the tent. Pace at once started for the town, and after three hours returned with the man in charge of a policeman with his hands tied. He had hunted him up in the town. He brought with him another dragoman (a friend of his own) and a strange inquiry began. It turned out that this fellow who for fifteen years had borne a good character, and was to have accompanied us throughout, had been sent last night to the police office to get a guard for the night. He returned, stating that the office was closed, but offering himself to assist in the watch. At three a.m. he had been seen and spoken to by Pace, who was going his rounds, and his only excuse for deserting his post was that he felt cold and wanted to get into a bed. He denied stoutly having had any hand in the robbery. So, they began by giving him a furious thrashing. Still he denied it. We offered to let him off if he would tell where the things were, and in a fit of rage he said he

had thrown them into the sea, and then again denied having had anything to do with it. We tried all we could to get him to confess, but in vain, and so, left him sitting in charge of the policeman while we proceeded to breakfast and to prepare for starting. A queer sight it was to see the two sitting on the grass together, sharing between them a huge native pipe which they smoked alternately. After breakfast we made out a list of the missing things, gave it to the other dragoman, and despatched him and the prisoner and policeman to the British Consul, repeating our offer to abandon the charge if the things were restored. The result is to reach us at Jerusalem.

I had determined, being independent of hotels, to take the longer but far more interesting route by Beth-horon to Jerusalem, and to make three easy stages of it. So, after consulting maps, we resolved to make our first stage at Umrush, a village between Lydda and Beth-horon, and with this instruction the cook, table servant, and muleteer all started with the tents and baggage; Pace and ourselves starting on horseback, with one man and a mule carrying the luncheon-tent and materials for lunch. We left Joppa about nine a.m., and the first excitement was R. being pitched off her horse about a quarter of an hour out of the town. Fortunately she was unhurt. She had no idea of riding, but improved in the course of the day.

A pleasant ride of three-and-a-half hours leads to Lydda. We took four; and after seeing the Church of St. George there, lunched under some olives to the west of the town. At the moment of beginning lunch the baggage train overtook us, and fearing to make too long a journey the first day, I asked Pace to tell them, if they found good camping-ground and water before Umrush not to go so far, but pitch the tents after two-and-a-half hours or so.

Having finished lunch we started at 2.30, and for an hour or two had a most interesting and charming ride. The country got wilder and more hilly. For half an hour from Joppa we had passed between orange and lemon groves, then came long stretches of level ground covered mostly with wheat, then Lydda with its olive groves, and then open country richly cultivated again. Where any village or enclosure occurred the fences and boundaries consisted of long lines of cactus, often much above our heads. We now got into a district where the ground rose into undulations and then into small hills, something like the swell of a Highland or rather Lowland moor; the bottoms of which were still cultivated wherever possible, but the upper parts of which consisted of successive masses of limestone rock, with herbage between, but the stone cropping up so constantly as to give the whole hills from a distance a white appearance. The beauty of the wild flowers was extreme. As we advanced we wound in and out among the hills along a rough mule-track, enchanted with the sweetness of the air, the greenness of the grass, the thousand wild flowers, until we began to think it was time to look out for the tents. No appearance of them! we rode on, scanning every hill or cluster of trees in front, and with increasing anxiety. Close interrogation of the people we met could tell us nothing of them, and we began to fear they had taken another road, but hoped against hope that they would be found to have joined our route a little further on. We passed the expected junction, but, misled by the statement of an Arab that there was no good camping ground or water for an hour-and-a-half further, pressed on hoping to find them in the end. At last it became our main object to get near some village where we could get shelter, as the sun was going down, and so on we pressed nervously and anxiously, and at six o'clock found ourselves at the Lower Beth-horon, a small

cluster of houses on the side of a hill, looking right up to the Upper Beth-horon, the scene of Joshua's victory over the Amorites, and with the Gibeon country closing up the valley in the distance. Not a trace of the tents! what were we to do? After some parley between Pace and the Arabs of the village, one of their Sheikhs led us through a cluster of mud and tumble-down stone buildings to a stone building in the higher part of the village, partly used as a mosque, and leading us up a flight of outside stairs emerged on the roof, from which entered a room a story higher, into which he ushered us. It was a deserted mosque, about twenty feet square, with one window near the ground partly blocked up with stones, and a groined roof about nine or ten feet high at the sides and a little more in the centre. The walls were rough with broken plaster and the floor thick in dust, but with some matting here and there. Into it we dragged our luncheon tent, and stretched it and our two rugs on the ground as a carpet, and so as the sun set, and the immediate darkness of these regions followed, looked at each other with something of the blackness of dismay.

Messengers were sent off in all directions to seek for the missing tents, and Pace, gathering sticks and getting a pan and rice, chickens, eggs, etc., from the Arabs, began to light a fire on the house-top in front of the door, and prepare some broth. Meanwhile the rain began to fall heavily, and, wearied with the long ride, we got four large stones rolled into the middle of the floor, put on them what wraps we could spare, and laid ourselves down covered with two cloaks—all we had. Fortunately it was warm, and indeed at first rather close. E. held up bravely, and laughed with and shook hands with and patted our Arab friends, who indeed were most amiable and hospitable. They told us we were messengers of good, having brought them the rain they needed.

What a scene it was! The low arched room, lighted up by two little oil lamps, almost like safety lamps, ourselves stretched on the floor, the flickering light of the fire outside, and the swarthy figures of the Arabs crouching over it!

The broth or stew completed, we supped on it and the scanty debris of our lunch, and then got some coffee made, and then with heavy enough hearts at eight o'clock resolved to try and rest. We made Pace come inside, but my breath was a little taken away when I saw the old Sheikh follow his example, and, shutting the little door, roll a large stone against it, and sit down on it as our watch for the night. By and by he left the stone and lay down beside Pace, and those who could sleep did so. What a night! The mosquitoes were in hundreds—the fleas in thousands! Poor E. did not sleep one wink the whole night, passing it partly lying and partly sitting up. R. slept none. I got twice about an hour or so's sleep. A. slept like a top.

A noise of voices about 11.30 p.m.—a loud bang at the door, and out of the rain and wind in rushed one of the messengers, bearing with him the tent lantern, and announcing he had found them. Soon after he was followed by one of our own men, half crazy with excitement, and soaking with rain. We had little mind to ask where they had been found—it was clear we could not go to them that night in the wild storm, and so our numbers being increased by these soaking unfortunates, and the old Sheikh having now felt himself entitled to retire, we barricaded the door again, and again lay down.

The wind began to howl unpleasantly through the broken window, and we closed it with more stones and with the British flag, and under its shelter tried in vain to rest.

Such a night!—would the hours never pass? I thought once it must be near daybreak, and looked at my watch—it was 1.30! Again

I looked—2.15! Would the night never pass? At last at 4.30 I roused Pace, and bade him light the fire and get coffee ready. The rain had ceased, the clouds were clearing away, and as I emerged on the housetop the morning star was brilliant in the east. Long time I paced up and down, watching the first streaks of dawn, and then the brighter day, and gazing right across the housetops on the hillside down which the Israelites chased the Amorites, and trying if I could realise that on the very spot on which I stood came down the hail like stones from heaven, and that on the hill before me Joshua had stood and prayed the Sun to stay on Gibeon and the Moon in the Valley of Ajalon.

By six o'clock we had all risen, shaken ourselves together, had coffee, and were ready to start. Hearty shakings of the hand to the Arabs, who kissed our hands and pressed them to their foreheads, and we mounted our horses, and under the guidance of the messenger of last night addressed ourselves to the tents.

And here began one of the most annoying things of the whole journey. The Arab maintained they were but an hour away, so, instead of remaining where we were, and having them brought up to us and re-pitched, so anxious were we to get E. to her bed, that we thought it better to go to them, having ordered breakfast to be waiting by a messenger sent at dawn. It turned out to be two-and-a-half hour's ride to where they were, and it was little wonder if at last E. began to think they were not there at all, and that there was some conspiracy to make off with them and our luggage. I will not dilate on the vituperations and maledictions which took place before at last we found them settled here, nor on the reproaches and excuses, the almost tears, that passed between the dragoman and his servants, nor on their history of their anxiety about us.

The whole thing arose from a mistake, which, without a large scale map, it would be difficult to explain. We had taken the right road, they a wrong turning, which yet by a circuitous route would have eventually led to Beth-horon, and finding good camping ground on the way had, as told at lunch, settled down at it.

The sun was bright, the breakfast excellent. E., R., and I all went to bed, and after three hours sleep we looked on things with very different eyes. We resolved to rest here all day, and spent a charming afternoon. E. took to sewing, A. went out with his gun, and I with him to gather wild flowers, and study from the nearest hill the geography of the scene. Long I sat, gazing on the long stretch of maritime country before me, with the Mediterranean Sea in the distance, and the buildings of Ramleh, Lydda and Jaffa visible as in a bird's-eye view, and behind me the white hills that separated us from Jerusalem. Then came dinner, and then an early retiral about nine o'clock to comfortable beds.

Thursday, March 11.

The evening had been lovely—the sky bright with stars—but during the night the rain came on in torrents, and the whole of this day has been an almost unbroken continuance of lashing rain and wind, rising sometimes to a gale. Channels have been cut all round the tents, their cords tightened, the pins shifted and great stones placed on them (the side of the dinner-tent for a moment blew in on me while writing), and things made secure. The horses have been stowed away in a house in the village, and we have spent the day in reading, writing, and eating. Not uncomfortably; but this is a sore obstacle to our progress. We have already lost two days.

Friday, March 12.

After dinner last night the gale increased to a hurricane, and I think we have proved both the waterproofness of our tents and the strength of their fastenings. It was impossible to write in the turmoil and with the shaking of the centre table, and at last we were glad to leave the large dinner-tent and seek our smaller sleeping ones. For a time E. hesitated about undressing, and I must say at times I found myself thinking what would happen if we were bodily blown away. However all stood fast, and we went to bed about 8.30, the wind soon after lulling a little, but the rain continuing in something like waterspouts till early morning. Somehow we managed to sleep not amiss on the whole, and for an hour or two this morning were almost hopeful that in the afternoon we might move. The sun came out brightly, and a few hours of sunshine dries the ground. But on came the rain again, and wild bursts of it and bright gleams of sunshine have made up the morning. The worst seems over, but we have (eleven a.m.) abandoned the idea of moving, and, under the direction of E., the Arab men and children with Pace as leader have been constructing causeways of stones leading between the different tents with great success.

Our situation is a very fine one. We occupy a plateau of meadow ground, fenced round on all sides but one with hedges of cactus, and having in it no less than seven or eight wells of considerable depth and excellent water. The houses of the village rise up the hill to the east, with olive trees here and there, fig trees and cactus groves, and to the west we get a view between the rising grounds of the maritime plain and of the sea. To the south-east we catch a glimpse of the Mountains of Judea. When shall we be able to cross them?

4 p.m.—After bright bursts of sunshine and some hours cessation of rain, the storm has come on again nearly as bad as ever. The downpours of rain and blasts of wind are extraordinary. Beginning in a moment they end as abruptly, but succeed each other with such rapidity that it is impossible to venture many yards from the tents. It sometimes looks as if the "heavens were opened," and torrents descend on our heads.

Saturday, March 13.

Still prisoners here. All morning deluded by gleams of hope—bright flashes of sun-light alternating with pours of rain. Pace has secured a room in one of the houses for E. and myself in case the rain continues at night, for we fear the continuous damp, though both as yet are as well as possible. We have been up to look at it. A little hole some seven feet high and the size of a bath-room, but warm and well swept out, opening off a yard from which another Arab dwelling enters, where the children gaze at us curiously. The Skeikh of the village welcomed us, and walked with us round the village. Courteous and gentlemanly in his manner as they all are. He pointed out a curious sarcophagus cut out of one solid block of limestone, with a mass of the same stone for a lid, and three divisions at the head marking it as intended for three people—the centre one with a portion of the stone at the foot scooped out for the feet—evidently for a man and his two wives. We also saw another hewn in the solid rock itself, and were told there were more about the place, marking it thus as an ancient site. I saw in one he showed me what seemed to be rather an old cistern, with small cisterns adjoining it and overflowing into it. One of the latter merely shaped out and left

unfinished. There were more wells too—in fact, the ground seems filled with wells, which are very deep and evidently of great age.

A messenger sent yesterday to Jaffa has returned with a supply of bread and stores. For myself I have quite begun to like the Arab scones of dark coarse flour. He brings word that the guard who was implicated in the robbery has been put in prison, and with him the head man of the village, there to remain till the articles are returned, of which they seem to anticipate no doubt. A queer country! There is a strike in Jaffa among the shopmen, as the value of the exchange in Turkish piastres has taken a drop of some fifty per cent. It fluctuates daily, but this is surely exceptional! though we heard something of it a day or two ago.

4.30 p.m.—The sky has been clearing itself all day of the fearfully heavy clouds of the last two days, and I have been looking forward to a fine sunset, when another blast of wind and rain has swept across from the west. Pray heaven it may be the last!

5.30.—The storm cloud has rolled away, and as it passes to the east a magnificent rainbow spans the sky in complete arch before our tents. The sun is shining in the west in a sky almost cloudless, and heat and brightness and hope and thankfulness are around and within us.

Sunday, March 14.

2 p.m.—Alas for our hopes! about two a.m. a fresh storm broke on us, so violent that E. hesitated whether she should not dress in case the tents were blown away, but was comforted by Pace who was on guard. The sky cleared again, but at six a.m. again clouded over, and at eight a thunderstorm passed over us, with loud peals and a perfect deluge of rain. At ten the wildest blast

of all succeeded, and since then the rain has fallen almost without intermission. E. has kept her bed all day, the best and warmest place, for since the thunder it has been much colder, and we had even some hail. It is hard work too to get fires to burn, to supply charcoal for our brazier in this dreadful weather.

We have just had lunch (*i.e.*, I, A., and R.)—cold chicken, Irish stew, and whisky toddy—and are all wondrously comfortable under the circumstances.

They have a queer way here with the dogs which infest all the villages. We select a good big one, give *him* bones, and he acts as a guard to keep off all the others, and even any children who come too near the tents. Pace tells me that at Jerusalem he always does this, and the dog will accompany the party to the end of the journey. We have got one here who keeps the ground to himself.

E. has had grilled chicken and boiled rice for her lunch as she has not been feeling quite so well, and had besides strong chicken soup in the forenoon. Pace is invaluable in these things, and has got chickens for her enough for a week.

4.30 p.m.—We have had a wilder blast than ever, but all stands firm. We have, however, thought it better to move E. and R.'s beds up to the room we took in the village, in case the storm should continue till night, taking advantage of a fine blink, and have got the floor covered with rugs and a dressing-table sent up. One of our men will act as guard if they sleep there. But there are blinks of sunshine coming out which give me hope, and the barometer, which fell a tenth of a degree between two yesterday and eight this morning, has more than recovered the fall.

E. rose about three, and she and I have been inspecting the kitchen. It is wonderful with what a small apparatus such meals are produced.

Everything is cooked by charcoal. The supply of food is ample for many days, and a man is at Lydda getting odds and ends.

Here is the thermometer reading since we were shut up here, taken in my sleeping-tent :—

	Lowest at previous night.	Highest at previous night.	Lowest during day.	Highest during day.
11th,.....	55	60	47	59
12th,.....	42	58	51	58
13th,.....	49	57	49	60
14th,.....	49	61	45	54

We have all kept wonderfully free of cold save R., who had a threatening of it yesterday, but is better to-day.

We have been up to see the little room for E. and R., which has been made wonderfully snug with rugs and the two beds and a dressing-table. It is about—not quite—the size of our wine cellar, but only some seven feet high, with a door four feet high, and a little hole high in the wall, about four inches in diameter, for a window. Part of it is taken up with a corn store. An old arch goes across the centre, and the roof on each side is made of brushwood on the inside as black as your hat. E. and R. have been introduced to the two wives of the Sheikh—one thirty-five years old, the other a rather pretty girl of fifteen. They all, with five children, live in one little room now that we have taken up the other one. They were all most anxious to do their best for us, poor things. The old man took in the young wife when she was a child out of pity, as she was homeless, and did not like in the end, it is said, to put her out, so just married her last year!

Dinner—strong soup, stewed chicken and cauliflower, mutton cutlets and beans, roast chicken and potatoes, plum pudding—About 8.30.

E. and R. went off under the guidance of the Sheikh and Pace, in a lull of the storm. One of our men guards at their door all night.

Monday, March 15.

It is well they went, for the storm last night fairly out-did itself, and culminated in a perfect hurricane. It was impossible to get anything like continuous sleep in the tents. Four times I thought we should be blown away; three times I got up to look out if all were standing. It was a comfort to see the light from the lantern of the man watching, and the white pyramids standing steadily in the dim light. I hesitated once or twice whether it would not be safer to dress to be prepared for emergencies, but after a time got pretty well satisfied that all was secure, and during the latter part of the night slept pretty well. But it was the incessant nature of the rain I fancy that lulled me, for it hardly ever intermitted, though now and then it rose into a perfect Pandemonium.

Up at the house E. and R. had found the water, in the early morning, coming through the roof, and had to move their beds; but it began to leak in many places, and R.'s mattress got wet and her dress soaked and E.'s pillow wet, and altogether it is a marvel they are so well as they are. The young wife brought them a brazier of hot coals twice at night and again in the morning, and they came down here by 7.30, before either A. or I were up. But for the wet they would have had a good night, for the thick fortress-like walls of the building deadened the sound. But what are we to do if we have another night like the last?

Curiously, my aneroid is steadily rising, and is now a tenth of an inch above what it was yesterday afternoon, but there is little look of improvement in the weather outside, though the wind is much less.

Pace declares in all his experience he has never seen such a storm in Palestine. Of course the passengers for Jaffa have no chance of landing, and must go on to Beyrout. Poor souls! we are better off than they.

Thermometer in my tent last night was—lowest, 39; highest, 47.

11 a.m.—In case we have to spend another night here (which would be our sixth!) Pace has secured another larger room with a stone roof, having got the villagers to clear out of it, and has had it swept clean. I can't help hoping, however, we may move a stage after lunch. Glass still favourable and blinks of sun coming again.

3 p.m.—Have abandoned all idea of moving to-day. The blasts of wind and rain continue, though with less force and at greater intervals. In one of the lulls we went up to look at the room for E., which we found to be an old mosque divided into an outer and inner room. It serves usually as a sort of caravansarai, and is now swept out and guarded for us. A bright blink tempted us to continue our walk, and A. and I made a diversion to some curious cuttings in the rock, the greater part of which seem to have been reservoirs, and of great antiquity. The whole village is surrounded by them. The wells are so numerous, and all apparently of the same depth, that I almost fancy there is a large subterranean reservoir in the limestone below us to which they give access. They are clearly of great age. Some of the stones of which the houses are composed are very large, and the masonry of some of the walls very good—the whole place, with its one-storey buildings covered with flat roofs on which the grass is luxuriant, and divided into sort of terraces by lines of cactus hedges, gives me the idea of a fortress.

8 p.m.—A wild blast of hail—the third to-day—about 5 o'clock made us have beds for E., R., and myself sent up to the mosque. Their two

beds are in the inner room or mosque proper, constructed of solid blocks of stone and arched ; in the outer room, separated by a small door and a step lower, and arched partly in stone, partly to all appearance in rock *in situ*, is mine. A guard is to sleep inside my room at the door on the floor. The outer room appears at one time to have had the three sides open arches, which have been walled up. After an excellent dinner, we have been playing at chess. The wind has entirely gone down, the sky is clearing, the moon bright, and though the old clouds are hovering in the west the glass continues to rise.

Tuesday, March 16.

It was a strange sight last night when E., R., and I wandered into the mosque, with Pace, the old Sheikh, and three of our attendants. A study for Rembrandt. The low dark arched room, the light from the lantern's gleam on the wild yet smiling faces of the Arabs, and the whole surroundings gave exactly the impression of a band of travellers captured by brigands, or of the prison-scene in the "Trovatore." E. and R. having gone into their room, the men, all but one, were dismissed, and he stretching his mat in front of the door, closed it, put a stone against it, and lay down in his clothes. Then in turn I undressed, and, with my revolver under my head, slept the sleep of the just.

E. had a disturbed night for the first few hours—the eeriness of the place told on her, but she slept the latter part of the night. At 5.30 I wakened, and about 6 dressed and went out. The wind was totally gone, the clouds high, a bright light where the sun had risen, but a close rain falling. It cleared off, however, in half-an-hour, and promised tolerably well. The farther hills towards Jerusalem were white with new fallen snow, and it felt cold, but so fresh.

E. and R. rose shortly after me, and we were down at the tents to breakfast by 7.30. Weather looking much better and glass rising, though a slight shower fell just after breakfast. Now (9 o'clock) it seems clearing all round, but we have resolved, after so much delay, to run no risks, and to delay till 11 or 12 our final resolution as to a move. If we go by 1 o'clock we shall easily reach Upper Beth-horon to-night. We have to think not only of rain on the journey, but wet on the camping ground.

	Highest.	Lowest.
Thermometer during day yesterday in tents,	48	39
Do. last night, „	46	38

Of course in our dinner tent it is greatly warmer owing to the charcoal brazier, and in fact quite comfortable.

7.30 p.m.—After a serious consultation this forenoon we resolved to remain here another night, in the wisdom of which Pace, the cook, and the butler all agreed. There were skiffs of rain in the morning, and the sky looked very unsettled. I am certain we have done right. A. and I took a long walk round the place in the afternoon, and from the highest point we reached we could see a sprinkling of snow on the Beth-horon hills. Had we left at noon we would have encamped on the high ground; if we leave early to-morrow we shall cross the hills to Nebi Samuel, and be in a milder region and not more than three easy hours from Jerusalem.

The afternoon has been bright, and now the sky is almost cloudless and the moon and stars in their glory.

During our walk we saw many of those curious old reservoirs and tombs cut in the rock, and some strange and extensive caves which for want of ropes we could not explore. There is not a doubt that the site is that of an old, I believe, pre-Israelitish city. There are

traces of ancient terraces all about it. The soil is marvellously rich, and wherever turned up evidently prolific. In one enclosure we saw vines.

E. and R., under the guidance of Pace, had also a ramble ; and the freshness of the air, the brightness of the sun, the returning heat, and the prospect of deliverance from a week's confinement made us all new creatures.

Thermometer to-day in tent—highest, 58 ; lowest, 45.

TENTS PITCHED
NEAR THE JAFFA GATE, JERUSALEM.
Thursday, March 18, 1880.

Yesterday morning we were free at last, having just made out a week at Berfilyah. A lovely morning. We breakfasted at 7, but it was 8.45 before we got fairly away. In two hours we again reached Lower Beth-horon, and then began a climb up the hill in front by about the worst road I have ever travelled. An old Roman road led over the pass, the remains of which we repeatedly came upon. Up the steep slopes of limestone it had been led in nothing short of a series of steps and stairs, lighting upon which in the wilderness was curious enough. From the summit the view was magnificent, the whole country to the Mediterranean lying stretched before us as on a map. We lunched at the top, and then began a two hours' ride to Gibeon, across the wildest and bleakest moorland I ever traversed, and by a road that increased in badness at every step. We soon came on patches of snow, and as we got into the heart of the hills these increased until we passed over drifts some inches deep ; the coldness and sterility of the scene baffles description. Around Gibeon, which stands on a curious raised circle of limestone ridges, the snow

was very general, and then began a positive climb up the hill of Neby Samwel, a very commanding situation about two and a half hours north of Jerusalem, by a road which, had I not seen it, I would hardly have fancied horses could have traversed. Arrived at the top we found that our people, seeing the snow so thick on both sides of the hill, had taken possession of the ruined mosque on the summit, formerly a church of the Crusaders, and there made up our beds in the subsidiary rooms, the cook being hard at work in the transept. It was a scene that would have brought down the house in any melodrama. The old church some fifty feet in height; our table placed in the apse; the cook's fire burning in the transept, with groups of Arabs curiously looking on; a double row of galleries at the end of the nave, up which led the way to our rooms, and along which our attendants were flitting back and forward; the old windows near the roof letting in the skies and birds and, alas! cold air; and at one side a closed recess in which is the alleged tomb of the Prophet Samuel—all combined to form a scene that Rembrandt would have delighted in. I hurried to the roof of the mosque, and there, far to the south, traced along the sky, I saw like a writing in the blue, a line of domes and minarets and buildings peering over a distant hill, and was told it was Jerusalem!

Perhaps it was the combination of feelings, perhaps the ride, perhaps the cold, perhaps the whisky toddy I took to cure the cold, but for the first time I felt out of sorts, and could take little dinner. I feared I had got a chill, and so immediately after dinner I was put to bed, had a hot foot-bath, was well wrapped up, and after a rather restless night found myself in the morning almost as well as ever.

It was a lovely morning, and long I gazed at the distant city while we were preparing for departure. We left at 10.45, and for the first

part of the ride the road was nearly as bad as before. On one occasion we crossed a drift of snow about three feet deep! Gradually it got less and less, and became much more sparsely sprinkled along the terraces of the hills where the sun had not had power to melt it. In about two and a half hours we had surmounted the last ascent, and found ourselves among a perfect chaos of new buildings, convents, villas, churches, schools, which within the last year or two have been creeping beyond the walls of Jerusalem to the north. Anything more unlike what I had expected I never saw. Soon the city wall itself appeared, and the well-known features of the Damascus Gate. Coasting round the walls we came at length to the Jaffa Gate on the west, by which, amid a crowd of Jews, Russians, Greeks, Turks, and every class of nationalities, with beggars innumerable and filth unutterable, we entered the Holy City. We stopped at the Mediterranean Hotel, but it was full, and we were told the same thing of the Damascus Hotel. We looked at some rooms in the Greek Convent, but they seemed cold and cheerless, and the access bad, so we returned outside the gate where our tents were being pitched, in contiguity to several others, and, as the weather seemed fairly set in for fine, resolved, at least for the present, to keep to them. We found also beside us the encampment of some young fellows we had met at Jaffa, and had coffee with them while our tents were being pitched, and then had lunch, after which A. and I, with a dragoman Pace had engaged, set off to telegraph home and to Damascus, and thereafter went on to the Church of the Sepulchre, where we spent the afternoon.

I am not going to write, in this journal, a book on Jerusalem, so I will merely say that this church—which I do not believe covers any one of the sites it professes to enclose—was yet to me a most impressive spectacle, far more so than I could have anticipated. It brought

one's heart into one's mouth to see the devotion of the worshippers. We joined the Roman Catholic procession as it visited the several stations, and went over every corner of the building.

To-morrow I go to the Consul to present my letters, and to begin a detailed survey of the whole city. At present it is a little difficult for me to realise that I am under its walls, and much more than difficult to write what I think and feel.

Friday, March 19.

	Lowest.	Highest.
Thermometer in tents at Berfilyah on Tuesday night,	38	53
Do. yesterday at Jerusalem during day,	43	65
Do. last night „	39	53
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* * * * *	*	*

AIN ES SULTAN, PLAINS OF JERICHO,

Tuesday, March 30, 1880.

Sent to the Post-Office and Mediterranean Hotel for letters, in vain. No letters have come to Jerusalem by this post at all! Our last paper is the *Herald* of the 11th instant, and our last letter, Leslie's of the 12th, intimating the vacancy in the Glasgow and Aberdeen University seat. The absence of all knowledge of what is going on is sufficiently vexatious. The last news from home are M.'s letters of the 7th and 9th, and we can now hear nothing more till next Tuesday!

Sending for letters having detained us, we did not get away till





8.45, our tents having been sent off at five, so as to get the best situation at Ain-es-Sultan, in advance of several parties who were to arrive that day from Marsaba.

Leaving by the Damascus Gate, we rode round the walls, and joined the Bethany road at Gethsemane. Riding on, the force of Stanley's description of the spot on which Christ wept over Jerusalem, and of the whole route of the ride upon the ass into the city, struck me with double force. It seems hardly possible from the configuration of the ground, but that the very spot, on which He despatched the disciples on their errand, and on which, beholding the city, He wept over it, can be fixed within not a few yards, but a few feet. Here we have, indeed, a genuine holy site.

Past the little village of Bethany, nestling, as of old, in a gorge of Olivet, we rode up the same steep up which Martha ran to meet Him, and could almost point to the spot, at the turn of the road, where she would pause on catching sight of the advancing figure. Of course, the so-called "Stone of Rest" is away off the track, and where I cannot think the road ever went. A new Greek Church is now building over the stone.

The whole route was full of memories. By it He passed from Jericho more than once. At what is called the Apostles' Well—the only water for two hot and weary hours—He must have paused to drink. In the wild and lonely scenery of the road He laid the scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

From Bethany for two hours the road follows the bottom of a winding valley—rich soil at the foot, bare and stony hills rising on each side—not a house to be seen, except far to the east the ruins of an old fortress, which we are told is half way. Climbing up a steepish ascent towards it, we find a cavern in the rock, turned into a

sort of khan, and near it the ruins of a very extensive caravanserai built round an ancient well, and on the sward near it, lovely with wild flowers, we pitch our luncheon tent and are happy.

After lunch I stroll up under a burning sun to the old ruin, and am rewarded by finding the remains of a mediæval castle in a situation of commanding strength, with a moat round it cut in the solid rock, and in places more than twenty feet of perpendicular depth. The moat nearly quite perfect—the outer stones of the building removed, doubtless, for the larger building below, but the cellars still remaining, and enough of the inner masonry to show that it has been a large, and lofty, and extensive building. On one side I can trace the valley of the Jordan, with its strange limestone channel, running through a tract of seeming desert ground, and the great plain behind stretching up to the hills of Moab; on the other, the buildings on the summit of the Mount of Olives; but to North and South nothing but interminable ranges of bare and barren hills. Except the houses on the top of Olivet, not a human habitation is in sight.

According to rule, we had an escort of Bedouins—two went on with the tents, one and a young sheikh with us. This young fellow was one of the handsomest fellows I ever saw, with a bright, smiling, intelligent countenance, in manners a gentleman, and speaking French fluently. He was mounted on a good horse, and it was his delight to start off at a gallop, up hill—down dale—wheel round his horse in a circle, curve his course to and fro, then draw his sabre and gallop back to each of us in turn, making a feint of riding us down, and wheeling round as he seemed to cut at us, and gallop off again. He looked the model of a high-bred, handsome, good-natured son of the Desert. He had a good English gun—the rest of the escort the usual flint-locked or long-barrelled Bedouin guns.

After lunch the road became more varied, passing occasionally under precipitous limestone cliffs, and always descending. A wild road for a lonely traveller to meet a wandering horde. After some hour or so more we caught sight of the Dead Sea, glittering in the brightest blue, through an opening of the hills, and soon after came upon the edge of the ravine of the river Cherith—the wildest in all Palestine—and a gorge of which even Switzerland might be proud. Passing along its margin, we saw before us the whole plain of Jericho, from hill to hill some twelve miles broad, and looking very lovely. At the mouth of the gorge, we thought of the deed of vengeance in the olden time, when Achan was stoned with stones till he died, for taking of the accursed thing at the fall of the city—a fit scene for the terrible deed. Down a track which now was more like a stair than anything else, we wound into the plain, and some two miles to the north caught sight of our tents pitched beside the mounds at the foot of which springs the fountain that marks the site of the ancient city. Leaving the wretched collection of huts, which with one square tower marks the site of Herod's Jericho to the right, we crossed the Cherith, near traces of some ancient aqueducts; and winding through the plain, carpeted with flowers, and dotted with bushes of the *Spinea Christi* and enclosures of barley in full ear, reached our encampment.

With great discretion, its site had been fixed on the side of the mound farthest away from that of the usual camping-ground, on which numerous parties were already located. I despair of describing the beauty of the spot.

From the mounds at the spring there rose up, to the first reach of the hills behind, a slope perfectly covered with wild flowers, and dotted with bushes of thorn. The eye was dazzled with the

brightest of colours. Nothing I have seen in Switzerland came near it. Yellow, mauve, bright scarlet, actually took the place of green—it seemed as if each blade of grass had burst into bloom. Among them were the mauve blossoms of an everlasting flower which we might almost have gathered in handfuls with our eyes shut. Around our tents, at the doors, inside the tents themselves, the bed of colour was everywhere before us, and wherever we turned the eye it was the foreground. A quaint old ruin of the Crusaders' time, connected by a chain of ruined aqueducts with other ruins on the hill behind, stood beneath us, and behind we looked over the first rising plateau of the hills, across a deep valley beyond, to the bare precipices of the Quarantania Mountain, the alleged scene of Christ's temptation, which rose into the sky, (for all the world, a miniature of the Gemmi Pass as seen from Leukerbad,) with a monastery on its summit, and its wild precipices studded with the grottoes of hermits, and cells of Greek and Abyssinian monks.

In front the eye roamed over a rich meadowland of flowers and grass and barley, thickly studded with trees, and in some places a perfect jungle of tropical plants, to the arid plains that reached to the deep defile, where, in a limestone cutting which hid the foliage along its banks, we knew the Jordan rolled to the Dead Sea; and far beyond it the plain stretched onwards in a thick haze to the mighty wall of the Moab Hills, which bounded the horizon. Turning to the north, the same plain rolled upwards, till the mountains on each side to our view seemed to close it in; while to the south glittered the bright blue of the mysterious sea we were to visit on the morrow. It was a scene to remember for life, had it been only for the natural beauties of the spot.

And where can we find a scene more full of associations?

Climbing to the top of the mound beside our tents, I gaze across the Jordan on that first camping-ground of the Israelites after their forty years' wanderings, from which they beheld the promised land. From one of the Moab hills before me Balaam had looked down on them, and, though he came to curse, been forced to cry out, "How goodly are thy tents, O Israel!" From another "over against Jericho" Moses went up to gaze on the land he was not to enter. Further to the left is the lake which swept over the cities of the plain; here in front and around me is the site of the city which first fell before the march of the strangers, as the priests compassed it round on the seventh day seven times. Behind me is the mountain into which the spies retreated from the house of Rahab, with the gloomy vale of Achor cutting into it at one side, and on the other the pass up which the 3000 pressed to Ai and returned defeated, and up which in turn the purified host passed on to conquer, and that wild night-march to Gibeon hurried by. Through the haze I may try to see the terraces of Jordan where the sons of the prophets paused, when on the other bank Elijah was taken up to heaven; or fancy at what bend it was that Naaman came down to bathe, or where on the plain Gehazi turned on his errand of lies. Right below me is the fountain that Elisha healed, all around me the scene of his miracles and life.

And then to that distant river came one preaching in the wilderness, and to him One greater than he, who came and was baptised of John in Jordan.

But the time fails me—the recollections increase and multiply. Israelitish story—Christian memories—tales of the old ruthless life of Herod and of his gloomy death—stories of Crusaders and Saracens,

all crowd upon the mind, and the sun is setting, and the bright glow of the evening hour warns me to descend before, as in this wondrous climate, in a moment it will be dark.

Wednesday, March 31.

A day of days. The heat was great, but tempered nearly all day long with a refreshing breeze, which enabled us to enjoy to the full our visit to the Dead Sea. It was, perhaps, the only day of the week in which we could have done so.

We left our tents before 7, and through paths winding among the trees and brushwood, knee-deep in wild flowers, rode to the modern Jericho, the most miserable cluster of huts I have yet seen, and, crossing the Cherith, to the plain beyond. For nearly an hour's distance this plain needs nothing but irrigation to render it as fruitful as it was of old, and even yet the grass springs up in the parched soil, and flowers grow, wherever the inequalities of the level have let the winter torrents leave their traces. Soon, however, it merges in a strange wild region of disintegrated limestone, broken up in deep cuttings and gorges, the cliffs along which look like the Seracs of a Swiss glacier, and where there is hardly any trace of vegetable life. Yet, even here, when the gorge is deeper than usual, the willows and reeds and juniper are seen struggling for bare subsistence. To this succeeds a tract where level sand, or rather disintegrated limestone, covered here and there with a white exudation of salt, is only occasionally dotted with a withered juniper bush. All sense of distance is lost in the wondrous atmosphere; we seem at the end of two hours to be as far from the sea as when we started. Yet we reach it at last in $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours' ride. The shore is lined with a row of withered roots and trunks of trees brought down by the Jordan, and thrown up dry and sapless and

crackling on the shingle. But except for this, nothing more beautiful could be desired than the shore itself. The gravel and sand is pure and lovely—the water exquisitely clean. I hurry down to taste it, and fall back with an exclamation. Anything more abominable I never conceived. The saltiest brine is nothing to it. It has all the taste of Glauber's salts and brine combined. I can't get the taste out of my mouth for an hour.

Round a little bay we rig up the luncheon tent with the awning projecting over the water, and there E. and R. undress in quiet and bathe, while A. and I join some other travellers who are also bathing a little way off. The long ride in the intense heat makes the bath most refreshing, and the extraordinary buoyancy which the water gives to the body makes it exciting. It is almost impossible after swimming to regain the ground, one's feet so incline to fly upwards, and the struggle is all the more earnest from the desire to keep the water from one's face and eyes. Beyond a curious cakey feeling about the hands, which I removed by washing them in cold water, I felt no inconvenience from the dip.

The atmosphere immediately over the sea is so hazy that on its banks you can see little of the mountains at the southern end, which melt into the mist—much less than you see from Jericho or its neighbourhood. The heat became greater as the day passed on, and we were glad to mount and hurry away to the Jordan.

Striking angularly across a flat and arid plain, something like what we had passed in the last hour of our morning's ride, we came in three-quarters of an hour to the margin of the channel which the river has cut for itself in the limestone, and which is lined throughout with a luxuriance of almost tropical vegetation. Deep below the level of the plain on each side, it is only when you enter on this belt of

verdure that you appreciate its extent, or indeed become aware of its existence. Many of the trees are of very considerable height, and the thick grass and tangled brushwood make an almost impenetrable jungle except where paths have been traced by the numerous pilgrims. But, alas! for the first view of the Jordan itself. A yellow muddy stream, for all the world like a gigantic sewer, it rolls along, as little picturesque in itself as the Tiber at Rome.

We halted near the place where the Latin pilgrims bathe, and spread our luncheon tent under the trees, but such was the look of the river and the muddiness of its banks that we did not bathe as we had intended.

Moving up its banks afterwards to where its bed was more broken than at the halting place, the first impressions wore off with the pleasant ripple of the waters, but the stream itself, and the bare broken limestone cliffs that jut out at this point from its eastern boundary, were not prepossessing.

A two hours' ride in a straight course back to Jericho, and half-an-hour more along the flower-carpeted road to our tents, closed a very memorable day.

In the evening we sat and watched the Bedouin fires on the hills of Moab, and listened to the distant song of the villagers regaling the occupants of other tents with their monotonous chant and dance, and unearthly shrieks, as they had done to us on the night before.

Thursday, April 1.

The fatigue induced by the last two days made us resolve to spend another day here, and the exquisite beauty of the spot was such that it was unanimously resolved to make it two more days instead of one.

The heat to-day was very great and the weather rather hazy—the mountains of Moab, indeed, being invisible all day. A. went out with his gun, and I explored the remains of the aqueducts that come down behind the tents, and of which I made a very thorough examination, which I need not, however, enter here. In the afternoon we had a visit from Dr. Black, of Wellington Street U.P. Church, and Mr. Matheson, from Lanarkshire, who with Dr. Knox, a U.P. minister from Glasgow, and two others, have been travelling by Mount Sinai and the long desert, and are here on their way to Damascus.

Friday, April 2.

Another perfectly glorious day, and much less hazy. A. going out again to shoot, I took one of the Bedouins and ascended to the foot of the Quarantania mountain, intending to trace the leading aqueduct up to Ain Duk, its source, to the north-west of our tents. He took me, however, first by a zig-zag ascent up the slope at the foot of the hill, and then by a most extraordinary path consisting of steps, partly cut in the rock, partly built, to a wild ledge that beat the Gemmi road all to nothing, and which for some hundred yards was a simple walk cut in the face of the precipice. It led to a series of caves, one of them of large extent, inhabited by Greek monks, and having opening from it a very curious chapel cut in the rock, from the balcony of which, or from the windows of the cave, you literally look out into space, over the plain, as from a balloon. Here I was hospitably entreated with lemonade and coffee. Looking at the visitors' book I found few entries save those of Russian or Syrian pilgrims, a few Americans, but only four English names since 1874! I was so taken by the weirdness

of the place that I prevailed on E. to visit it with R. and Pace in the afternoon.

From this, returning to the base of the hill, we traced the aqueduct for an hour to Ain Duk, the second great source of the ancient fertility of the plain. We passed several Bedouin encampments, and came upon one Bedouin shooting partridges, with the strange oblong shield of canvas they use to stalk the birds. He came with his trophies to the tents in the afternoon, and A. went out with him for an hour or two, and says he seemed to scent the birds like a pointer, only employing to all appearance the sense of hearing instead of the sense of smell. At the fountain, from which, in two copious streams and one or two lesser ones, a considerable amount of water was flowing, I found an encampment of pilgrims from Jerusalem, and was again invited to coffee, though I declined. I returned by the other side of the gorge that runs up near the fountain, inspecting on the way a branch aqueduct of the time of the Crusaders, diverging from the main one and crossing the ravine on three rows of arches of curiously irregular size and of very considerable height. This is in excellent preservation, but hid in a nook, and curiously is not referred to in any guide-book I have seen.

Another beautiful evening closed a charming day. We had a drop or two of rain in the morning, but it was more a wonder than anything else. At sunset, both yesterday and to-day, the wind suddenly, for nearly half an hour, rose into a wild gust, but the day itself was perfect.

Here is the thermometer during our stay at Ain-es-Sultan, as taken in my tent, both sides of which were generally open during the day to let in the air :—

				Lowest.	Highest.
Tuesday, night,	-	-	-	52	68
Wednesday, day,	-	-	-	61	85
" night,	-	-	-	56	75
Thursday, day,	-	-	-	72	89
" night,	-	-	-	62	75
Friday, day,	-	-	-	70	82
" night,	-	-	-	54	70



DAMASCUS HOTEL, JERUSALEM,
Saturday, April 3.

With great regret we left the plain of Jericho at 6.45, in a day that promised great heat, which, however, was tempered by the continual ascent of nearly 4000 feet to Jerusalem.

We rested for a few minutes at the khan half-way. We fixed our luncheon tent just in sight of Bethany, on an eminence above the so-called "Stone of Rest," and from which we could catch a distant view of the Jordan valley and a glimpse of the Dead Sea. Looking with my glass on the Moab hills beyond, I was greatly struck (favoured by the peculiar light) with the marked trace of a former sea-beach about half way up, taking back the mind to the days when the Indian Ocean must have washed the bases of these hills, long before the records of man.

Then once more along that memorable road, along and around the slope of Olivet, past the Garden of Gethsemane, and so, circling round the northmost corner to the Damascus gate, we reached the hotel once more.

In the afternoon E. went with Pace to the bazaar to make some purchases, and I strolled into the Church of the Sepulchre, and afterwards to Shapira's shop and had a long chat with him. Met Schick

thereafter in the street, and promised to call for him on Monday after our return from Bethlehem, and have some further talk.

In our absence the Consul called and sat nearly an hour with A. chatting. He came to return Fergusson's "Temples of the Jews," which I had lent him. He said he had been looking for years for an intelligent Englishman who would prove his intelligence by remaining at Jericho for more than the stated single day!

It is a good thing so to plan a tour as to revisit a principal city, if only for a day. I find the streets of Jerusalem like old friends, and the well-known objects in and around the city fixing themselves closely in my remembrance.

Sunday, April 4.

All of us very lazy, and A. and I rather unwell. E. breakfasted in bed, but took a turn with A. after lunch. A. was the only one of us who ventured to church in the morning, and R. the only one in the afternoon.

I took a stroll outside St. Stephen's late in the afternoon, but did not feel up to going farther. Day very close. Sky clouded. No air.

A nice couple—French Protestants from Lausanne—have come to the hotel, and the American ladies who were here when we left are here still, but leave on Monday.

We all of us look back on our five days' excursion to Jericho as an oasis—a thing to be remembered for ever. The young sheik, who it seems is only six months older than A., and was married at eleven years of age, called with his uncle to-day, and gave us his photograph at our request. He is a son of the well known Abu Dees, the late head of the Bedouins of the Jordan, of which his

uncle, a fine-looking man, who also visited us at Jericho, is the present head.

Monday, April 5.

Some rain during the night, and a threatening sky with occasional drops in the morning, made us delay our start for Bethlehem till half-past ten, when the weather had resolved into a curious hot mist which rendered any distant view impossible, but was tempered by a pleasant breeze.

Leaving by the Damascus gate, we passed our old encampment outside the northern wall, and bending down by Cook's establishment, rode along the hill on the west side of the upper part of the western valley, till we joined the main road from the Jaffa gate. The road was broad and good from this point, and might, with the minimum of trouble, be made an excellent carriage road. A new suburb of neat-looking German houses is springing up here. The road passes along the supposed valley of Rephaim, the scene of many conflicts in the days of David with the Philistines, and on reaching, in three-quarters of an hour, the crest of the hill where the house of the Greek Patriarch lies to the right, and the large monastery of Mar Elyas to the left, a view is caught of Bethlehem on the slope of a hill some way in front. Sweeping round the top of a valley,—the northern side of which is nearly all ledges of stone, but the southern rapidly yielding to cultivation, terrace above terrace,—we pass a large new Roman Catholic Hospital, a refuge for the poor of all creeds, and at the foot of a farther descent the mosque erected over the site of Rachel's tomb, where the road to Hebron diverges. Keeping to the left we toil up the hill to Bethlehem, and are amazed to find ourselves in an entire street of new houses, with houses

building in every direction. The town must have nearly doubled in size within the last few years.

The usual narrow winding street, the usual dirt and filth, the usual crowds blocking up the passage in all imaginable costumes, dogs lying under the horses' hoofs, laden camels resting in the middle of the street, and at last a large open place, at the end of which is the paved court fronting the Basilica of the Nativity. It was the forenoon meal-hour, and we had it at first all to ourselves, with the strange exception of the Turkish guard, one of whom, with fixed bayonet, stood in the transept, and one in the gloom of the grotto of the Nativity itself!

It was with curious feelings I paced the nave of this—the oldest Christian church in the world, every one of its columns still in their original place. The view of the interior of the church is sorely marred by a wretched wall erected by the Greeks in 1842 between the nave and transepts; but the long rows of columns make the nave one of the most striking objects I have seen. After examining the remains of the mosaics above the columns, and also in the transepts, we passed down to the Grotto of the Nativity, the site of which we can trace as an object of pilgrimage further back than any other, and stood awhile silently before the slab with the silver star in the centre, and before the representation of the manger at its side.

The door to the Caverns below the Latin Church being locked, we returned to the front, and were hailed by Pace to our lunch, which had been set out in the refectory of the Latin monastery.

This dispatched, one of the monks, a pleasant chatty man, who spoke German well, took us to two schools for children in the convent, and then to the Latin Church of St. Catherine, lying parallel to the old Basilica and communicating with it. It is being enlarged

at the cost of the Emperor of Austria. Below it lie a series of caves in the rock—the one of deepest interest, that where Jerome spent so many years of his life, and translated the Septuagint into the Vulgate. The place of his grave is shown close by. We then returned under his guidance to the great Church, and again revisited the Grotto of the Nativity.

Looking at the various shops for the sale of carved shells and other remembrances of the place, and buying a few with an infinite amount of bargaining and talk, and in the midst often of a whole crowd of wretched spectators, took up a longer time than we thought, and it was half-past 3 before we started on our return, reaching the hotel about 5. I had intended to have called on Schick in the afternoon, but it seemed too late, and on sending Antica, our Jerusalem guide, to tell him so, I found that 7.30 to-night would suit him. And so I write this entry, and now go to dress for dinner.

Tuesday, April 6.

Rain during the night, and a heavy shower this morning, which detains me as I write this.

Called last night on Schick and got from him photographs, showing the original structure of the Dome of the Rock as disclosed during the recent repairs. Arranged with him to complete for me a large model of the site of Jerusalem, showing in successive layers of paste-board the contour lines at intervals of five feet, taken from his own borings, those on the Ordnance Survey, and Capt. Warren's and Lieut. Conder's. It will be unique and most valuable.

Had long talk with Capt. Inglis, late of the 71st, and now a Civil Commissioner at Cyprus—the man who shaved the heads

of the two Greek priests, about which there was such a row in Parliament, and a very fine fellow.

4 p.m.—Letters at last, thank heaven,—one to E. from N. and one to me from M., and a newspaper of the 24th. Everything else must have gone to Damascus, and though we telegraphed there on the 18th to have them sent on there is no word of them. But what a relief it has been to hear from our own ones that *they* are well!

Bade good-bye to Shapira; looked in with A. at the curious remains of wall in the Russian ground that Schick had showed me last week, and paid a final visit to the Church of the Sepulchre before lunch.

After lunch went with A. and bade good-bye to the Consul, then—he going home to write letters—I took Antica, and had a long walk up Scopus, where the Romans encamped during the siege, and from which the view of the city is the finest I have seen. We then passed along the hill to the summit of the Mount of Olives, and inspected the new excavations in the Russian ground, where mosaics, and tombs, and arches, and cisterns are turning up in shoals—one of the mosaic pavements being far and away the finest I have seen since I came, and then passing down by what is called David's Way, entered the city and examined the Haram western wall where we could go to David Street, and left a P.P.C. card for Dr. Chaplin.

Met E. and Pace in a walk through the streets, which ended in her final visit to the Sepulchre.

On the hills the wind was very strong. Heaven send us calm weather. Friday (to-morrow) we start for Jaffa.

Wednesday, April 7.

Thermometer in room last night—lowest 59, highest 68.

A lovely morning—bright sun, but with a pleasant breeze. Left Jerusalem at 7.45, having arranged with a Canadian gentleman, who was going to Damascus, by steamer to Beyrout, to post our letters written last night, and to re-address home all the letters lying for us at Damascus, which, though I telegraphed on the 18th ult. to the hotel, have never been forwarded.

Parted from old Antica, our Jerusalem guide, with real regret, and leaving the city by the Damascus gate rode round to the Jaffa road, the only carriage road in Palestine, and a queer one. A pleasant ride up and down some very steep hills, and over what at first was a bleak and barren district but with fine mountain views, brought us to the village of Abu Goosh in about three hours—the ancient Kirjath-Jearim where the Ark rested after its recovery from the Philistines. Along the road we had traversed, swept the great procession when it was carried in triumph by David to Zion, and most probably along that road lay the route to Emmaus, traversed on the first Easter Sunday by the two disciples and their risen Lord. The situation of the village clinging to the side of a hill, amid cultivated fields and olive trees, and one large palm, was very lovely, and made all the more so by the very striking ruins of an early Christian Church, close beside which we pitched our luncheon tent.

We rested some two hours here, and soon after leaving caught sight of the Mediterranean and the great maritime plain. The road from thence began to wind along a succession of glens far more richly wooded than I have seen in Palestine. Altogether, I was agreeably surprised by its beauty. Even in Switzerland it would have passed muster. Some of the finest old olives I ever saw were on each side,

and a thick coppice in which whin in full bloom soon become prominent. The wild flowers too were very numerous and lovely.

About 3.30 we reached our tents pitched at the mouth of the Wady Abi, just about half way to Jaffa, in a lovely situation, near a small inn kept by a Jew, and close to one of the numerous watch-towers that line the road.

Before sunset A. and I climbed up the crags on the south side of the Wady, gathering wild flowers, and looking at obscure traces of ancient cutting on the stones. We had a lovely view of the Mediterranean and the plain between.

Thursday, April 8.

Thermometer last night in tent, lowest 54, highest 74.

Another glorious day, extremely hot sun, but with a very strong wind until we got fairly into the plain.

Unfortunately we had on this our last day in tents, as we had on our first, a robbery, which, though as it happened of little moment, might have been very serious. The place is of bad repute, and we had heard tales of robberies until E. had got nervous and had little sleep. We did not tell her at the time what really passed. A. in undressing put his watch into his sponge bag which was hanging from one of the fastenings of our tent. Looking round he saw the opposite fastenings open, and remembering a story he had heard of a guard seeing when a party was undressing where his valuables were placed, it struck him that through these open fastenings some one might have seen what he had just done, so he removed his watch and put it under his pillow. In the morning he found the fastenings to which it had been attached open, and the sponge bag gone! We had a guard from the guard-house. I have little doubt it was he, but

nothing, of course, was found, and though, perhaps, I might have followed the matter up by a formal complaint to the police, I was too worried to be anything but glad to get away. Pace stayed behind to make what investigation he could, but nothing came of it. These two robberies have left unpleasant reminiscences on what otherwise, with all its misfortunes, had been a most enjoyable trip.

Passing Latroun, a town which—so-called originally, probably from its association with robbers (*Castellum Latronis*)—the ingenuity of the middle ages assigned as the birth-place of the penitent thief—we had a very hot ride, latterly along a level plain, to Ramleh which we reached in three hours. We could see from the road the long lines of the Judæan hills stretching to the north, with places well-known to us now—such as Neby Samuel and Upper Beth-horon in the far distance, and Lydda in the plain below. At Ramleh we pitched our luncheon tent, and now, for the first time, discovered that R. was very far from well. She could take no lunch—felt very sick, and could only try and rest. We remained between two and three hours, by which time, having taken some hot soup and some whisky and water, she maintained she was quite better and able to go on. In the interval I visited the curious old Gothic tower of Ramleh, rising to the height of some 150 feet from the ruins of one of the largest mosques I ever saw, and standing as a beacon for many miles on every side.

The ride to Jaffa was good three hours more, and, until we fairly got into the orange groves that surround that city, very uninteresting—passing between vast flat expanses of cornland—the hills, which would have lent interest to the scene, being behind us. But once in the orange groves, everything was forgotten in the glorious scent of the orange blossom, with which the air was full. It was strange to see the same tree covered with the white bloom,

and at the same time laden with ripe fruit. For a good half hour before arriving the road was lined on each side with orchards, and when I opened my window in the middle of the night to breathe the air, the scent was almost overpowering.

Reached our old quarters at the American Hotel at five, and were delighted to see the ocean like a millpond.

R. was very much done up, and, feeling pained all over her limbs, had to go to bed at once.

Friday, April 9.

Lovely day—intensely warm—sea even calmer than yesterday.

Found, to our supreme disgust, that instead of having, as Floyd, Cook's agent, had assured us, our pick of berths, there was not a first-class cabin to be got on board the French steamer ("Tage") which arrived this morning. Nor had Floyd himself turned up as promised. Wrote him a letter stating what I thought of his whole treatment of us, a copy of which I told him I would send to Cook, but, of course, did not.

Secured two berths in a ladies' five-berthed second-class cabin for E. and R., and two berths in a gentlemen's four-berthed cabin for A. and myself. Marvellously comfortable—as good or even better than the P. and O. first-class berths.

Strolled through the town. The bazaar at Jaffa, even to those who have been in the East, is a busy and striking scene, and must truly open the eyes of a stranger direct from Europe. In Howard's reading-room came upon Watt, from Glasgow, whom I had met at Jerusalem, who, having been at Damascus, is returning in this steamer to Marseilles. He tells me at least a dozen letters and a whole trayful of papers are lying for me at Damascus in the hotel, same at Beyrout at the post-office. Pleasant this. Except a *Herald* of the 25th, I have not seen a paper of later date than the

12th ult., and though through the special goodness of Providence we had letters on the 6th from M. and N., these, and one from Leslie, are all we have had since the 21st. Wrote Jones, the Canadian, who is to be here to-night, to send on letters from Beyrout, as well as from Damascus, to London.

Went on board the "Tage" at 2.30; sea like a millpond. How good Providence has been to us. Poor R. really very unwell and very feverish—what should we have done had it been a storm? She was put to bed the moment she got on board, and E. got the doctor of the ship to see her. He is young, and does not seem to know much, but thinks there is no regular fever, only a slight touch of the sun during the long and hot ride of yesterday; ordered some medicine and camomile tea. Most fortunately the only berth taken in the ladies' cabin, except E.'s and R.'s, is by the lady's maid to our old friends the Misses Monk, whom we met at Cairo, and who at once insisted on R. taking hers as the airiest, and has attended to her like an old friend.

On board the ship are two clergymen, English and Scotch, my friend Watt, a worthy couple from the North of England we met at Jaffa, (and who, like us, could not get first-class berths, so that the husband shares the cabin of A. and myself,) and the Consul-General of Syria, Mr. Etheridge, from Beyrout, for a year's leave, with his wife and family, the young children being about the frankest and brightest I have met with. Though second-class passengers, we have right to the quarter-deck, and the dinner in the second-class is really first rate, and includes good wine.

We sailed at 5, and had a most enjoyable evening on deck, playing all sorts of games till 10.30, and then to bed on a sea perfectly calm, and with the bright stars overhead.

Saturday, April 10th.

Intensely hot day, a regular sirocco wind, sea like glass.

Reached Port-Said at 6 a.m. Found it impossible to get first-class cabins for to-night either, and it is just as well, for we are very comfortable, and R. has the benefit of Miss Monk's maid. But arranged to have our meals in the saloon by paying extra.

R. greatly better this morning, feverishness much gone, and she able to be up in afternoon and evening and on deck. E. keeping wonderfully well. She went on shore for a time with Miss Monk and the English clergyman. A. and I and Watt went early in the morning to get the latest news, and came back astonished with the result so far of the elections. We had telegraphic news up to the 8th, and find it difficult to realise that so sudden and utter a collapse should have taken place in the "Imperial Policy." We think of what some folks in Glasgow will be saying, and wish we had telephones in connection. It is a judgment on duplicity, the one great blot on the Beaconsfield-Salisbury administration. We are all now bursting with anxiety to hear the names of the elected for Glasgow and the counties round.

Port-Said is a lively enough place just at the port, and, for a division or two along the streets abutting on the harbour; but otherwise is a perfect desolation. It has curiously enough never increased since first built, and the great enormous hotel outside the town, built by the Prince of the Netherlands, and capable of holding some hundred guests, is the picture of desolation. The intense heat to which it is exposed on a strip of sand running out into the sea, and the absence of all shelter, must make it an awful place to live in; and yet it is hard to see how it can fail in time to become a place of some note. While we lay in the harbour, which we did from 6 a.m. to about 4 p.m., the

number of vessels that came through the Canal was astonishing, and it was most interesting to watch the great steamers from India as they slowly steamed past, with their decks crowded,—in one case with elephants on board for some zoological garden at home.

The day passed drearily all the same in the intense heat, and we were glad indeed when we sailed at four, a breeze having sprung up, but the sea still being perfectly calm. The coast of Egypt is so low that in a little while the lighthouse and other buildings of Port Said looked for all the world like a second Venice, standing in the midst of the sea itself.

As night passed on, we saw and passed in turn the Damietta and another lighthouse, and then, after another long round of games, we went to bed as before about half-past ten.

Sunday, April 11.

We had reached the entrance to the harbour of Alexandria when I woke up, and we arrived about 6 a.m. Another perfectly lovely day, only rather too hot.

R. greatly better, and our minds quite easy about her. E. somehow or other did not sleep so well, but had a perfectly quiet night.

Had a row with the first lieutenant before landing. He had charged me three Napoleons extra for our getting our food in the first class, which without thinking I had paid, and this morning the steward brought me a note of the amount due on a printed form, being 10 francs. It was evident that this, being the difference between the price of second class and first class dinners for three and two dejeuners for three, was more like the thing, and I appealed to get back 50 fs., but without avail. The first lieutenant swore the steward was a fool, and that no one could dine

first class unless he paid first-class fare. It was a swindle under the circumstances, as we had specially arranged; but I had made myself a fool by paying it without thinking, and it is not easy to get money back. As the second class dinners are practically as good as the first, I was thoroughly done, and lost my temper, and vowed all sorts of things, none of which, of course, I am going to carry out.

Landed at eleven and drove to the Hotel d'Europe. Pace saved us all difficulty with our luggage, which was not even looked at. On arrival delighted to get letters at last. N. declares she has not heard from us for three posts; and we have written several each week. No newspapers, however. I begin to think I am fated. I learn from the Egyptian telegram that three Liberals are in for Glasgow, and that the continuous flow of Liberal triumphs goes on unchecked. What would I not give to know of Midlothian, Dumbarton, Stirling, and Renfrew, and many more!

We are certain at last, after no end of doubts and difficulties, of getting berths in the P. & O. steamer which sails on Friday. It looked at one time as if it were very hopeless—the rush of passengers from India, who have the preference, being so great, and our souls were greatly troubled yesterday at Port Said on this score. Aquileia, Cook's agent at Alexandria (and a most civil and obliging agent too), having met us there, and for the first time I having learned that it was impossible to secure berths at Alexandria till the steamer had reached Suez, and the number of Indian passengers been telegraphed. But the agent of the Company here to-day has given us his word that we shall be accommodated in first-class cabins somehow. We would have been in a serious difficulty had we not got room, and might have had to go to Naples or Trieste; and every berth is full

in the "Tage" which sails on Tuesday for Naples. As it is, we must hang on here till Thursday night and then go on board. The arrangements for travelling to and from Palestine—even when you come to know them—and that is no easy matter—are simply framed as relating to a country left out of all consideration whatever.

However, we are very comfortable here—good rooms—good food—and time to rest a little and get our things and thoughts in order.

Had a very pleasant drive yesterday afternoon to the Vice-Regal Gardens outside the town and heard the band play. The gardens are fine and the scent of the oranges delightful. Not many people—chiefly French—but the dresses of the children were specially beautiful.

The Misses Monk have come to the hotel to spend the time their boat lies here (till Tuesday) with a friend from Cairo—the other passengers go and come.

Monday, April 12.

A day of perfectly wasting heat. Thermometer in room last night, lowest 74, highest 75. It is almost impossible to cross the street in the sun. From one to three the greater part of the shops are closed, and the place—busy enough in all conscience at other hours—assumes the appearance of a Sunday.

E. had a good night, but R. this morning does not seem at all well—has been hot and cold by turns all day. We have got her put to bed, and given her chicken soup, and she says she is better, but if not decidedly so by the afternoon, we shall get an English doctor to see her.

I have secured tickets for the Brindisi steamer. In this boat all the cabins have three berths, so we cannot get separate ones. E. and R. will have somebody in theirs, and A. and I some one in ours, but when the berths are allocated on Thursday (on receipt of a telegram from Suez as to the number of Indian passengers) the agent, who is very civil, promises to do his best for us.

Last night we wrote Mr. Bell, the correspondent of the *Times*, whom we met at Cairo, and who was very kind in offering to be of service, asking him to help us as to some purchases. He called this morning, but as he is leaving for England by a Southampton steamer on Wednesday, was too pressed for time to go himself, but brought his head assistant, a pleasant young English fellow, who went out with E. and then came to lunch. Bell has just been here with his wife (three o'clock) calling for E. She is very nice. E. unfortunately was out with Pace, but they are both coming to see us in Glasgow in May.

A. has ordered a new suit of clothes, being fairly at his wits' end owing to the robbery of his suit at Jaffa, and he and I are getting our boots resoled, so our delay here has one good side to it. We shall go on board on Thursday afternoon, and perhaps sail that evening. My great hope now is that the Brindisi mail which is due on Thursday morning may be delivered before we start. It should bring both letters and duplicates (for which I wired from Jerusalem) of the missing *Heralds* from the 12th to the 25th March—good reading for the boat.

Have wired Mat. to telegraph who has got in for Dumbarton, the University, Renfrew, and Stirling, and to address up to Thursday to Brindisi and after that to Hotel Danieli, Venice.

I think we shall return by Verona, the Brenner, Munich, Cologne, and Brussels, and be in London about 5th May.

9 P.M.—The doctor has seen R., and says she has had a little touch of fever, but that this is nothing to be uneasy about, and that she will be all right in a day or so. She says herself that she is feeling better to-night, and our minds are easy about her.

We had a telegram from Mat. at 6.15 to-night giving the names of the successful candidates in a number of elections, and know that Ewing has won Dumbarton; Bolton, Stirling; and Tennant, Peeblesshire. It left Glasgow at 3.40, and as there are two hours difference in time between this and Glasgow, must have come in less than an hour. He tells us "all well"—how glad we are!

A. is off to a theatre with another young fellow, and as this must be posted to-night I must now stop.

Tuesday, April 13.

Thermometer last night in room—lowest, 73; highest, 77. Strong wind rose during night and lasted all day, moderating somewhat in afternoon. Sea rather rough. Bright hot sun.

R. was better this morning, but worse again during day. Sent for Dr. Mackie, who begins to have doubts as to whether she will be able for the sea voyage by Friday. He is to see her to-morrow morning and to-morrow evening, till which time our final decision is postponed. She is suffering from low Syrian fever, which may be checked but may not, and for which the possible depression of sea sickness might be very serious. E. cannot and would not leave her, and I cannot and would not leave E. It makes us very anxious. Meanwhile I have wired Cook & Son to delay for the present sending off the courier to Brindisi to-morrow.

Wednesday, April 14.

Thermometer in room last night—lowest, 71 ; highest, 74. A wild storm of wind all last night, and the sea running very high this morning, but it seems calming down, and the sun is shining brightly. The chances are we should now be safe for a calm passage if we sailed on Friday.

The doctor called at ten and reports R. greatly better, and the fever apparently gone. He thinks we may now count on being able to sail this week. It has been an anxious time. She is certainly looking quite different.

9 P.M.—R. continues to keep better. It has been blowing less or more all day, but people seem to think it will not last, and Pace says the sea is considerably down in the harbour.

A French steamer has come in, but brought us no letters or papers. We have bought, however, the *Saturday Review* and *Spectator* of the 3rd, and the *Daily News* and *Standard* of the 3rd and 5th.

Thursday, April 15.

Thermometer in room last night—lowest, 68 ; highest, 71. Wind much down this morning, but still blowing—sea down—sun coming out strong.

R. keeping decidedly better. Dr. Mackie saw her at ten o'clock and advised us to have no hesitation about starting. If need be, we can all land at Brindisi.

Brindisi mail came in this morning and brought letters from M. to E. and A., from N. to E. and me, and one to me from Leslie. Not a word from the office! I can hardly doubt but that some of my letters or telegrams thither have miscarried. M. writes that he called there on the 7th, and found them still addressing papers to

Jerusalem. I have got the *Heralds* from April 5th to April 8th, the *World* and *Truth* of that week, but none of the duplicates from 12th to 21st March, which I specially telegraphed to them from Jerusalem to send me here. E. heard also from my aunt.

Saturday, April 17.

2 P.M.—Went on board the P. and O. steamer "Zambesi" about 2 o'clock on Thursday. Mr. Chapman, the agent, had been most kind, and though the vessel is very full, managed to keep a three-berthed cabin for E. and R. A. and I got berths in another three-berthed one, along with a very pleasant fellow originally from Glasgow—Barr, of Todd, Muller, & Co., of Liverpool and Alexandria, who knew me, though I did not know him, and knows Mr. Moffat.

We parted from Pace, who saw us on board, with much regret. The Indian passengers arrived about 6 o'clock, and among them, to our surprise, was Professor Balfour of Glasgow, posting home from his botanical expedition to Socotra, and, I am sorry to say, labouring under fever, or rather, I suspect, the effects of a slight sun-stroke caught there.

We sailed soon after 6 p.m., and it was soon evident we were to have a bad night of it. I got R. to go to bed before we left the harbour; E. held out on deck for about a quarter of an hour, but had then to lie down. A. and I made bold to sit down to dinner, but he had to take to his berth after the second course. I held out till the fourth, when I took to the deck, and kept there till 9 o'clock, the vessel pitching at no end of a rate. It was a horrible night. The pitching and rolling increased every hour—the storm, which was now abating, evidently having been very bad out at sea. Three times I was nearly pitched out of my berth. Very few showed at breakfast

Poor E. and R. suffered terribly. A. and I were never sick, but found it impossible to rise. Every attempt floored us. The sea, however, was gradually subsiding, and I soon became able to read in bed, and at length, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, got up feeling very queer. E. and R. and A. kept their beds all day, but all felt much better by the evening. The stewards and stewardess were very attentive.

By dinner-time I was nearly all right, and in the evening the sea was like a millpond, and the moon and stars lovely.

There are some nice people on board—the Bishop of Tasmania, his wife and family, including his son the Dean, and a number of old Indians and newly-married couples. The captain is most attentive and agreeable. Chapman specially introduced me to him, and he has been very attentive to E. and me.

Last night was quite calm, and this morning quite delightful. E. rose about 7 and had a bath, but had to lie down again, but she was up to breakfast, though with an effort. R. rose just at breakfast-time, and has pulled through wonderfully. A pretty strong breeze sprung up about 10, and there has been a good deal of rolling, but they have both managed to keep on deck, and E. came down to lunch. The day is lovely, we have been in sight of Crete since morning, and are now just getting in sight of Greece, and as the wind is going down, I hope our troubles are over—but Thursday night was certainly very horrible.

Poor Balfour has never been outside his berth. I saw him this morning; he tells me he was a little delirious yesterday he thinks, and the captain says the doctor says the same thing—the effect of the sun—but he thinks himself all right now, and at this moment is sound asleep.

We hope to reach Brindisi on Sunday night about midnight, and it will, of course, depend on the weather whether we go to Venice by rail or by sea. I sincerely hope the latter, as the railway journey is terribly tedious, and unless we go right through to London without stopping, we cannot get the Pullman car. We telegraphed, just before leaving Alexandria, to Cook, to send the courier to the Hotel Danieli, Venice, to meet us on Wednesday.

We got the London papers up to Friday before leaving, and I don't think I ever read the newspapers so thoroughly in my life! We look forward to a fresh supply of letters and papers at Brindisi so eagerly.

Sunday, April 18.

3 P.M.—Have had a very calm night, and to-day the sea has been getting calmer and calmer. The day is warm, but muggy.

E. still has a headache, but has been up all day, and R., for the first time, has been able to appear at breakfast and lunch. Everything seems to indicate we shall be able to go on by sea to Venice.

Balfour got up yesterday afternoon, but could not sit at dinner. He is up again to-day, and says he is much better, but he looks very ill. He goes on by the express right through, which I think is a great risk.

Had service in the saloon at 11 to-day—read by the dean, and a sermon from the bishop. It was a very abbreviated service—the whole thing less than an hour.

We expect now to reach Brindisi at 2 a.m. to-morrow. We stay there some 8 hours, and reach Venice early on Wednesday morning. We could not do it much faster even by the express, which would

involve us leaving at 4 a.m. and getting to Bologna at about 8 p.m., and by the ordinary trains we should travel all night.

Monday, April 19.

On board the "Zambesi."—4 P.M.—Since I wrote yesterday it has continued remarkably calm. About 9 last night, as we were nearing the Otranto lighthouse, a haze came over the distance, and the light, which had been caught sight of by A. and some others, could not be seen. After some time the captain stopped the ship to heave the lead, and E., who had heard of the "Travancore" running ashore just at this place a few weeks ago in a fog, got rather nervous, and thought we should land at Brindisi. But she got eased in her mind, seeing us go on as before, and the moon and stars coming out, and we all went to bed about 10.15.

We went, however, very cautiously all night, and I heard the foghorn sounding now and then. It was 4.30 this morning before we reached Brindisi.

The passengers for London by the express left us at once. I was up by 5 and was glad to see B. looking greatly better. He had just got through the custom-house, and was much annoyed at their point-blank refusing to let any of his plants pass, so he had to give them to the steward to take back to Suez to be sent home by Southampton. Dread of the phylloxera was, I believe, the reason.

Delighted this morning before we could get on shore to have letters and papers handed in to us. I had letters from M. and Mat, and E. from M., Mat., and Miss Kent. I had also a tele-

gram from Mat. announcing the result of the University Election, and that "all well." How we were all cheered!

Heralds, too, from the 12th to the 14th, and duplicates from 12th to 21st March all but one.

Telegraphed our safe arrival—that we were going on to Venice by sea, and to send duplicate Heralds of 16th and 17th.

E. rose to an early 7 o'clock breakfast—got up for the passengers who were going by the 8 o'clock train to Naples, and we bade good-bye to a number of very nice people with much regret.

A. went twice on shore while the coaling was going on, which takes place at a pier away from the town. I sat on deck watching the town and the boats passing to and fro, and afterwards took a stroll along the shore and gathered some wild flowers, which a French lady has been grouping and pressing for E. in quite a remarkable way.

The coaling—a fearfully dusty and dirty process—ended, we started at 11 o'clock, and are now sailing up the Adriatic under a brilliant sun, with a northerly breeze which just pleasantly ripples the water. Nothing could be more fortunate. The wind—what there is of it—is against us, but we could not in any event reach the Lagunes, that stretch some 12 miles south of Venice, before dark to-morrow night, and as it is impossible to pass through them in the dark, we are indifferent as to speed. We shall—all well—sail up the Lagunes to the city early on Wednesday morning.

Our numbers are now greatly reduced. The boat was very full before, now there will be only about 30 on board.

Tuesday, April 20.

3 P.M.—The finest day we have had. The sea like a mill-pond, the sun extremely bright. Just enough breeze to temper the heat which is sometimes rather too great.

We have kept out of sight of land all day. Reading and chess, and smoking and eating, have made up our history. This, counting Thursday, is our sixth day on board. We wish we could go on to Glasgow in the same way, stopping at the various cities on the road!

HOTEL DANIELI, VENICE.

Thursday, April 22.

Yesterday morning reached the entrance to the Lagunes about 2 A.M., and lay off till 4.30, when I rose and found us creeping up at a snail's pace between the breakwater and the row of posts that mark out the channel. We breakfasted at 7 but had to anchor from about 6.30 to 8, just outside of the harbour, for want of water, and then came the examination on board of the luggage, so that it was between 9 and 10 before we got here. The examination was the strictest I ever met with, every one of our individual boxes being opened and ransacked. Our courier who had arrived the night before came on board to meet us—a very decent-looking sort of fellow, called Smith,—and we have got very good rooms here, one of them looking to the front. The hotel is very large—with 300 guests—and nearly every room full. It is on the main quay, close to the Doge's Palace.

Letters waiting us from N. and Ina to E., and from N. to A., and

—joy of joys—while we were sitting at lunch came the long expected telegram. With what better news can I close my Journal. Truly, till I received it, I hardly realised to myself the load of anxiety from which it relieved us, or how, morning, noon, and night, our thoughts had been resting on one thing, about which we yet cared to say little, even mentally, to ourselves.



